

Abstract of the Disclosure

5 An e-mail filtering method and system that
categorize received e-mail messages based on information
about the sender. Data about the sender is contained in
the message and is used to identify the actual sender of
the message using a signature combining pieces of
10 information from the message header or derived from
information in the message header. This and other
information about the message is then sent by each member
of an e-mail network to one or more central databases (in
one embodiment, the information will also be stored at a
database associated with the recipient's e-mail program
15 and filtering software) which stores the information and
compiles statistics about e-mails sent by the sender to
indicate the likelihood that the e-mail is unsolicited
and determine the reputation of the sender (a good
reputation indicates the sender does not send unwanted
20 messages while a bad reputation indicates the sender
sends unsolicited e-mail messages). Information from the
central database is then sent to recipients in order to
determine the likelihood that a received e-mail message
is spam (information may also be obtained from the local
25 database associated with the recipient's e-mail program
and filtering software).